A PROPOSAL OF THE POETS To raise Their MAJESTIES A Sum of Money.

Humbly recommended to the Consideration of the Honourable House.

AT this critical conjuncture, when every good subject ought to set his Hand to the Plow, and use his utmost endeavours to support the present Establishment, we have not been wanting in our respective Stations to shew the sincerity of our Affection to it. As Fighting was never the Talent of our Tribe, we don't pretend to have obliged the Nation that way; nor dare we own our selves guilty of much praying, for that too is out of our Sphere; but with what alacrity and chearfulness we have drawn our Pens in their Majesties quarrel, let *Paul's Church Yard* and *Westminster-Hall* speak. No sooner is any Victory gained by our Forces in *Flanders*, but we take the Hint immediately, and Record it in Metre: Nay we may without vanity affirm, that could Rymings have done the business, the English had long ago beat their Drums through *Paris*, sent the mighty Monarch to Grass, and reduced the *Louvre* and *Versailles* to Ashes. What is a farther indication of our good will to the Government, we have not only rymed but prophesied for it, and if in the heat of inspiration we have laid the Scene of Conquest somewhat too early, and foretold Triumphs that did not happen at the time appointed, 'tis an errour on the right side, and we hope the Kingdom

will as readily excuse it in us, as they have done some modern Interpreters of the Revelations, who out of their great zeal to the Protestant Cause Prophesied the utter downfal of Antichrist wou'd certainly come to pass last year; tho' to our great sorrow we all see that the Man of Sin is still alive and lusty, and in all probability will not be induced to break up House-keeping under two or three year more.

Gentlemen,

You have made us happy under a victorious Prince, whose immortal acquisitions employ our Muses daily. You have preserved our Religion, and 'tis certain we Poets have a regard to that above all things; you have likewise secured us in our properties, and how deeply that point concerns the Sons of Ryme and Harmony we need not mention. For this therefore, and several other important considerations, our Fraternity at the last general meeting, after having considered of several ways to express their gratitude, did unanimously resolve to do what none of their Predecessours ever dreamt of, and in case your illustrious assembly shall think fit to approve of the proposal, offer to raise his Majesty six hundred thousand pound, and that too out of the Territories of Poetry. And tho' as all our ancient Papers inform us, *Parnassus* is *Apollo*'s *peculiar*, and never paid a farthing to any Government before, yet to testifie our Loyalty and Acknowledgement for the mighty things that have been done for the Nation of late, we shall chearfully contribute all that in us lyes, to the ease, benefit and advantage of the publick.

We need not remind you that Poets in all Ages and Countries of the World have been the sole dispensers of Fame and Glory. Now this being an Heroick Age, wherein every person is ambitious of Glory more or less, and yet wou'd rather purchase it with his Money at home, notwithstanding the present scarcity thereof, than acquire it by his Merits abroad, we humbly crave leave that under your authority and protection we may be impowr'd to Erect a *Glory Office* in all the principal Corporations and Towns in the Kingdom.

We have so contrived matters that this Office shall hook in all sorts of Customers, Lords and Peasants, Court Ladies and Milkmaids, Clergy and Laity, in short, the whole populace, by what Names or Titles soever dignified and distinguished.

As there are Masons in the City so dexterous at their Trade, that they can build a House to last precisely the time you covenant for, nay can so contrive matters, that the Roof shall tumble the very minute after the Lease is expired: so in our mystery we have Brethren that can write for a Day, for a Week, for a Month, for a Year, and so till Doomsday if the Chapman will go up to the price of it. In *Grub Street* they seldom write for above a Week. Some of the

better form in *Pauls Church-yard*, and about the *Temple*, with good looking after may last half a dozen years and upwards. The Wits of *Covent-garden* hold a shorter or longer space, according as they mix their colours, and some few among them pretend to confer immortality, and to endure for ever.

Now in proportion to these different Talents of Writing the several prices are to be regulated. Inferiour persons may have their Twelve pennyworth of Glory, (and under that rate we are agreed to sell none) and because Glory of that cheap composition cannot be supposed to keep long, we advise them to renew it twice a year. This branch of the Revenue is to be managed by the good people of *Grubstreet*, and the Commodity thus retailed is chiefly calculated for the Meridian of Dutch Troopers, Prentices, Milk-maids, Porters, Footmen, Farmers Eldest Sons, and Semstresses.

The middle sort of Glory from half a Crown up to twenty Shillings is to be distributed by the City Poet for the time being, and his assistants. And this may indifferently serve Vintners that can palm a new Wine upon the World, Physitians that have broached a new Religion, poor Townsmens Daughtets that have snapt an University-Fortune, Country Attorneys that can set a whole Corporation together by the Ears, prolifick Divines that to their great renown have puissantly begotten twenty Children, projectors of Pacing Saddles, and all such useful inventions to the publick, Schoolmasters that have floged their thousand younger Brothers that have stole great fortunes, puny Tradesmen that from Pins and Pack-thread have scuffled their way into a Common Council-ship. And not to mention any more particulars, all people of middle condition who have done any thing famous and remarkable in their generation.

The highest pitch of Glory, going under the name of *Elixir Immortalitatis* will be onely sold at *Wills* Coffee-house in *Covent-garden*, and will make the purchasers free of Epistles Dedicatory, Panegyricks, with the great priviledge and emoluments thereunto belonging. The price of it is just twenty Guineas, (wonderful cheap all things considered) and we doubt not will draw in infinite numbers to bid for it, such as Favourites and Courtiers, who would rather buy glory at any rate, than put themselves to the expence of obtaining it by their own deserts. Penurious Aldermen who having no inclination to purchase reputation by building of Alms-houses, may here get it at a cheaper rate. Lords Pages that have advanced themselves to a Sea Commission, but have a mortal aversion to Wooden Legs. The fine dressing talkative Sparks of the Town that take Garrisons, and model Kingdoms over their Claret. In fine all those persons who have a passion for Fame and Glory, but cannot be perswaded to sacri-

fice their eaſe, and pleaſures, or venture a broken Shin for its ſake. The only fear is, that to ſave charges ſome thrifty people will turn Poets in their own defence; but this inconvenience may eaſily be obviated by conſtituting a Supream Office here in Town, which ſhall have full Authority to place and diſplace as they ſhall ſee fit, and likewiſe to regulate the numbers of the City and Country Poets, as they have prudently done the numbers of Chairmen at *Whi e.hall.*

We humbly conceive that the revenue belonging to this Office will in a years time with prudent management raiſe if not the whole, yet at leaſt four parts of the ſum propoſed. However if it ſhould happen to fall ſhort of what we expect (for ſince the Gentry in two Welch Counties have lately renounced their Gentility to ſave twenty ſhillings a quarter, we may probably imagine that ſome perſons for all their pretended Courtſhip of *Glory* will rather let it alone than turn purchaſers) it cannot fail of being made up by the following expedients. We therefore deſire that an *Epithalamium Office* may be erected ſomewhere near the Commons, were all people that pay Scot and Lot to the Pariſh may be obliged to come for their Wedding Ballad, (without which no Parſon ſhall offer to Marry them under penalty of incuring a Poetical Cenſure) and that they ſhall pay either according to their quality, or the goodneſs of the verſe. In the ſecond place we propoſe an *Elegy-Office*, where not only Epitaphs of all ſorts may be had (without which it ſhall not be lawful to bury the party deceaſed) but alſo Funeral ditties upon Ladies Lap-dogs, Parrots, Monkeys, Lord Mayor's and Alderman's Horſes defunct: adjoining to which may be a *Nativity-Office*, where the Children of all ſuch Parents that are qualified as above mentioned, may have their Nativities Regiſtred in Ryme, and their Fortunes told into the bargain, which laſt favour will ſave their Friends the expence of going into *Moreſield*, or to Dr. *Saffold*'s worthy Succeſſour. For be it known to all the World, the Aſtrologers interlope upon the Poets, when they pretend to Prrophecy.

Theſe Offices you may order to continue ſo long as the War laſts, whereby their Majeſties ſhall receive ſix hundred thouſand pound yearly. We need not ſay any thing of the Circulation of Wit, the employing of many indigent perſons, and laſtly the great encouragement of the Paper Manufacture, all which will by this means be promoted and advanced. VVe only preſume to lay our propoſal at your Feet, and ſubſcribe our ſelves Your moſt obedient Servants the *Poets*.

We have ordered the City Poet, who drew up this Propoſal, to communicate this deſign to our dear Brethren the Poets of *Holland*, and to the reſt of the Confederates whom it may concern.

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